

Child Labor in the Mines

East Tennessee Historical Society

What rules exist for
young workers today?

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young workers today?

Tennessee Youth
Worker Poster

When were rules
concerning youth or
child labor put into
place?

The Fair Labor Standards Act 1938

The Fair Labor Standards Act banned most types of work by children under 16 years of age and banned hazardous work for children under the age of 18.

National Child Labor Committee and Lewis Hine

The National Child Labor Committee was founded in 1904 to promote the “rights, awareness, dignity, well-being and education of children and youth as they relate to work and working.”

In 1908, the NCLC hired former teacher Lewis Hine to travel around the country investigating child labor and to photograph the children.

Hine’s photographs were the centerpiece of the NCLC’s campaign to end child labor.



[Manuel, the young shrimp-picker, five years old, and a mountain of child-labor oyster shells behind him. He worked last year. Understands not a word of English. Dunbar, Lopez, Dukate Company. Location: Biloxi, Mississippi](#)



Stereotypical Child Labor Image

[Image of textile
workers in
Loudon
Tennessee](#)

Another Face of Child Labor

In this lesson, we will focus on the experience of boys like James O'Dell. Lewis Hine [photographed](#) O'Dell at the Cross Mountain Mine near Coal Creek, TN in December of 1910. Hine believed him to be 12 or 14 years old. He had been working at the mine for 4 months.



Autobiographical Narrative

Write an autobiographical narrative for Harley Bruce, the young boy pictured here. The narrative should focus on working conditions for boys in the mining industry.

Hine photographed Bruce near Jellico TN in December 1910. He estimated Bruce to be 12 to 14. He had been working in the mine for a year.

